



## **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

### **Federal Aviation Administration**

#### **14 CFR Part 39**

**[Docket No. FAA-2022-0288; Project Identifier MCAI-2021-00913-G]**

**RIN 2120-AA64**

### **Airworthiness Directives; Alexander Schleicher GmbH & Co. Segelflugzeugbau Gliders**

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** The FAA proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Alexander Schleicher GmbH & Co. Segelflugzeugbau Model ASW-15 gliders. This proposed AD was prompted by mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) originated by an aviation authority of another country to identify and correct an unsafe condition on an aviation product. The MCAI identifies the unsafe condition as wing root damage. This proposed AD would require repetitively inspecting the wing root ribs for cracks, looseness, and damage and replacing any root rib with a crack, a loose rib or lift pin bushing, or any damage. The FAA is proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

**DATES:** The FAA must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

- Fax: (202) 493-2251.

- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

- Hand Delivery: Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this NPRM, contact Alexander Schleicher GmbH & Co. Segelflugzeugbau, Alexander-Schleicher-Str. 1, Poppenhausen, Germany D-36163; phone: +49 (0) 06658 89-0; email: [info@alexander-schleicher.de](mailto:info@alexander-schleicher.de); website: <https://www.alexander-schleicher.de>. You may view this service information at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 901 Locust, Kansas City, MO 64106. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (817) 222-5110.

### **Examining the AD Docket**

You may examine the AD docket at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2022-0288; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this NPRM, the MCAI, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations is listed above.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jim Rutherford, Aviation Safety Engineer, General Aviation & Rotorcraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, 901 Locust, Room 301, Kansas City, MO 64106; phone: (816) 329-4165; email: [jim.rutherford@faa.gov](mailto:jim.rutherford@faa.gov).

### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

#### **Comments Invited**

The FAA invites you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under ADDRESSES. Include “Docket No. FAA-2022-0288; Project Identifier MCAI-2021-00913-G” at the beginning of your comments. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. The FAA will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposal because of those comments.

Except for Confidential Business Information (CBI) as described in the following paragraph, and other information as described in 14 CFR 11.35, the FAA will post all

comments received, without change, to <https://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this NPRM.

### **Confidential Business Information**

CBI is commercial or financial information that is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), CBI is exempt from public disclosure. If your comments responsive to this NPRM contain commercial or financial information that is customarily treated as private, that you actually treat as private, and that is relevant or responsive to this NPRM, it is important that you clearly designate the submitted comments as CBI. Please mark each page of your submission containing CBI as “PROPIN.” The FAA will treat such marked submissions as confidential under the FOIA, and they will not be placed in the public docket of this NPRM. Submissions containing CBI should be sent to Jim Rutherford, Aviation Safety Engineer, General Aviation & Rotorcraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, 901 Locust, Room 301, Kansas City, MO 64106. Any commentary that the FAA receives which is not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

### **Background**

The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2021-0187, dated August 9, 2021 (referred to after this as “the MCAI”), to address an unsafe condition on certain Alexander Schleicher GmbH & Co. Segelflugzeugbau Model ASW 15 gliders. The MCAI states:

Occurrences were reported of finding wing root rib damage. Investigation is ongoing to determine the root cause of the damage.

This condition, if not detected and corrected, could reduce the structural integrity of the wing assembly of the sailplane.

To address this potential unsafe condition, Schleicher issued the TN [technical note] to provide inspection instructions.

For the reasons described above, this [EASA] AD requires repetitive inspections of each affected part and, depending on findings, replacement. This [EASA] AD also introduces restrictions for installation of an affected part.

You may examine the MCAI in the AD docket at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2022-0288.

### **Related Service Information under 1 CFR Part 51**

The FAA reviewed Alexander Schleicher GmbH & Co. Segelflugzeugbau ASW 15 Technical Note No. 29, dated June 28, 2021. This service information specifies inspecting the root ribs at the wings.

The FAA also reviewed Alexander Schleicher GmbH & Co. Segelflugzeugbau ASW 15 Repair instruction exchange of wing root ribs according to TN 29, dated June 28, 2021. This service information specifies procedures for replacing the root ribs.

In addition, the FAA reviewed Alexander Schleicher GmbH & Co. Segelflugzeugbau ASW 15 Maintenance Instruction G, Issue 1, dated June 28, 2021. This service information specifies procedures for inspecting the root ribs at the wings for damage.

This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in ADDRESSES.

### **FAA's Determination**

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to the FAA's bilateral agreement with this State of Design Authority, it has notified the FAA of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI and service information referenced above. The FAA is issuing this NPRM after determining the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

### **Proposed AD Requirements in this NPRM**

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in the service information already described.

## Costs of Compliance

The FAA estimates that this AD, if adopted as proposed, would affect 20 gliders of U.S. registry.

The FAA estimates the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

### Estimated costs

Action	Labor Cost	Parts Cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Inspect root ribs	1 work-hour x \$85 per hour = \$85	Not Applicable	\$85	\$1,700

The FAA estimates the following costs to do any necessary replacements that would be required based on the results of the proposed inspection. The agency has no way of determining the number of gliders that might need these replacements:

### On-condition costs

Action	Labor Cost	Parts Cost	Cost per product
Replace all four root ribs	8 work-hours x \$85 per hour = \$680	\$1,000	\$1,680

## Authority for this Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

The FAA is issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements. Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

## Regulatory Findings

The FAA determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a

substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

(1) Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866,

(2) Would not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and

(3) Would not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

#### **List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39**

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

#### **The Proposed Amendment**

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

#### **PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES**

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

#### **§ 39.13 [Amended]**

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

**Alexander Schleicher GmbH & Co. Segelflugzeugbau:** Docket No. FAA-2022-0288; Project Identifier MCAI-2021-00913-G.

#### **(a) Comments Due Date**

The FAA must receive comments on this airworthiness directive (AD) by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

#### **(b) Affected ADs**

None.

#### **(c) Applicability**

This AD applies to Alexander Schleicher GmbH & Co. Segelflugzeugbau Model ASW-15 gliders, all serial numbers, certificated in any category.

**(d) Subject**

Joint Aircraft System Component (JASC) Code 5712, Wing, Rib/Bulkhead.

**(e) Unsafe Condition**

This AD was prompted by mandatory continuing airworthiness information (MCAI) originated by an aviation authority of another country to identify and correct an unsafe condition on an aviation product. The MCAI describes the unsafe condition as wing root rib damage. The FAA is issuing this AD to detect and correct damaged root ribs. The unsafe condition, if not addressed, could result in reduced structural integrity of the wing assembly, which could lead to loss of control of the glider.

**(f) Compliance**

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

**(g) Action**

(1) Within 30 days after the effective date of this AD and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 12 months, inspect all wing root ribs (4 places) for cracks, looseness, and damage in accordance with the Action section in Alexander Schleicher GmbH & Co. Segelflugzeugbau ASW 15 Maintenance Instruction G, Issue 1, dated June 28, 2021. If there is a crack in any root rib, a loose rib or lift pin bushing, or any damage, before further flight, replace the root rib in accordance with Action paragraph (B) in Alexander Schleicher GmbH & Co. Segelflugzeugbau ASW 15 Technical Note No. 29, dated June 28, 2021, and steps 1 through 7 in Alexander Schleicher GmbH & Co. Segelflugzeugbau ASW 15 Repair instruction exchange of wing root ribs according to TN 29, dated June 28, 2021.

(2) Replacing all four wing root ribs is terminating action for the repetitive inspections required by this AD.

**(h) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)**

(1) The Manager, International Validation Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the

manager of the certification office, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (i)(1) of this AD and email to: 9-AVS-AIR-730-AMOC@faa.gov.

(2) Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

**(i) Related Information**

(1) For more information about this AD, contact Jim Rutherford, Aviation Safety Engineer, General Aviation & Rotorcraft Section, International Validation Branch, FAA, 901 Locust, Room 301, Kansas City, MO 64106; phone: (816) 329-4165; email: jim.rutherford@faa.gov.

(2) Refer to MCAI European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD 2021-0187, dated August 9, 2021, for related information. You may examine the EASA AD in the AD docket at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2022-0288.

(3) For service information identified in this AD, contact Alexander Schleicher GmbH & Co. Segelflugzeugbau, Alexander-Schleicher-Str. 1, Poppenhausen, Germany D-36163 ; phone: +49 (0) 06658 89-0; email: info@alexander-schleicher.de; website: <https://www.alexander-schleicher.de>. You may view this service information at the FAA, Airworthiness Products Section, Operational Safety Branch, 901 Locust, Kansas City, MO 64106. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call (817) 222-5110.

Issued on March 15, 2022.

Lance T. Gant, Director,  
Compliance & Airworthiness Division,  
Aircraft Certification Service.

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